

# Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Child Development



## Infants (0-1 year old)

### Developmental Milestones

Cognitive development for your baby means the learning process of memory, language, thinking and reasoning. Your baby is learning to recognize the sound of your voice. She is also learning to focus her vision from the periphery or the corner of her eyes to the center. Language development is more than uttering sounds (“babble”), or mama/dada. Listening, understanding, and knowing the names of people and things are all components of language development. During this stage, your baby is also developing bonds of love and trust with you. The way you cuddle, hold, and play with your baby will set the basis for how he will interact with you and others.

*For more information on developmental milestones and warning signs of possible developmental delays, visit [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly) (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly>)*

### Positive Parenting

- Talk to your baby. It is soothing to hear your voice.
- When your baby makes sounds, answer him by repeating and adding words. This will help him learn to use language.
- Read to your baby. This helps her develop and understand language and sounds.
- Sing to your baby.
- Play music. This helps your baby develop a love for music and math.
- Praise your baby and give him lots of loving attention.
- Spend time cuddling and holding your baby. This helps her feel cared for and secure.
- The best time to play with your baby is when he’s alert and relaxed. Watch your baby closely for signs of being tired or fussy so that you can take a break.
- Parenting can be hard work! Take care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally. It is easier to enjoy your new baby and be a positive, loving parent when you are feeling good yourself.

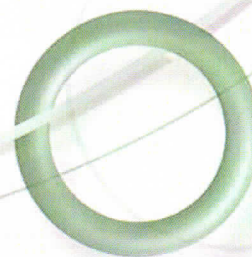


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# Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Child Development



## Toddlers (1-2 years old)

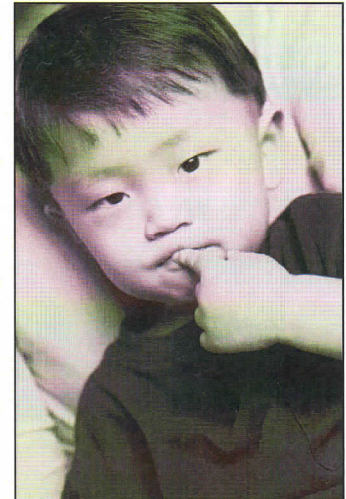
### Developmental Milestones

During this time, your child is becoming increasingly more mobile, and aware of himself and his surroundings. Her desire to explore new objects and people is also increasing. During this stage, your toddler will show greater independence, begin to show defiant behavior, recognize himself in pictures or a mirror, and imitate the behavior of others, especially adults and older children. Your toddler will also be able to recognize names of familiar people and objects, form simple phrases and sentences, and follow simple instructions and directions.

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### Positive Parenting

- Keep reading to your toddler daily.
- Ask her to find objects for you or name body parts and objects.
- Play matching games with your toddler.
- Encourage him to explore and try new things.
- Help to develop your toddler's language by talking with her.
- Encourage your toddler's curiosity and ability to recognize common objects by taking field trips together to the park or a bus ride.



### Child Safety First

As your child is becoming increasingly mobile, his ability to encounter more dangers is increasing as well. Here are a few recommendations to help keep your growing toddler safe.

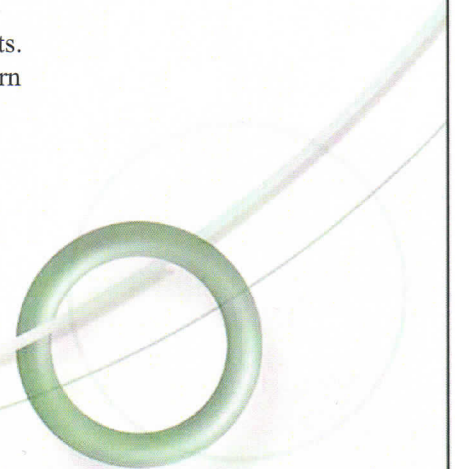
- Block off stairs with a small gate or fence. Lock doors to dangerous places such as the garage or basement.
- Toddler proof your home by placing plug covers on all unused electrical outlets.
- Keep kitchen appliances, irons, and heaters from the reach of your toddler. Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- Keep sharp objects such as scissors and pens in a safe place.
- Lock up medicines, household cleaners and poisons.
- Never leave her alone in the car, even for a few moments.
- Store any guns in a safe place out of his reach.

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# Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Child Development



## Toddlers (2-3 years old)

### Developmental Milestones

Because of your child's growing desire to assert her independence, this stage is often called the "terrible twos." However, this can be an exciting time for you and your toddler. He will experience huge intellectual, social, and emotional changes that will help him to explore his new world, and make sense of it. During this stage, your toddler will be able to follow two- or three-phrase commands, sort objects by shape and color, imitate the actions of adults and playmates, and express a wide range of emotions.

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### Positive Parenting

- Set up a special time to read books with your toddler.
- Encourage your child to engage in pretend play.
- Play parade or follow the leader with your toddler.
- Help your child to explore her surroundings by taking her on a walk or wagon ride.
- Encourage your child to tell you his name and age.
- Teach your child simple songs like Itsy Bitsy Spider, or other cultural childhood rhymes.

### Child Safety First

Encourage your toddler to sit when eating and to chew her food thoroughly.

- Check toys often for loose or broken parts.
- Encourage your toddler not to put pencils or crayons in his mouth when coloring or drawing.
- Never leave your toddler near or around water (that is, bathtubs, pools, ponds, lakes, whirlpools, or the ocean) without someone watching her.
- Never drink hot objects while your child is sitting on your lap. Sudden movements can cause a spill.

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# Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Child Development



## Preschoolers (3-5 years old)

### Developmental Milestones

As your child grows into early childhood, his world will begin to open up. She will become more independent and begin to focus more on adults and children outside of the family. He will want to explore and ask about his surroundings even more. Her interactions with family and those around her will help to shape her personality and individual ways of thinking and moving. During this stage your child will be able to ride a tricycle, use safety scissors, show awareness of gender identity, help to dress and undress himself, play with other children, recall part of a story, and sing a song.



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### Positive Parenting

- Continue to read to your child. Nurture her love for books by taking her to the library or bookstore.
- Let your child help with simple chores.
- Encourage your child to play with other children. This helps him to learn the value of sharing and friendship.
- Help your child's language by speaking to her in complete sentences and in "adult" language. Help her to use the correct words and phrases.
- Be clear and consistent when disciplining your child. Model the behavior that you expect from him.

### Child Safety First

As your child becomes more independent and increases her interaction with the outside world, it is important that you and your child are aware of ways to stay safe. Here are a few ways to protect your child.

- Tell your child why it is important to stay out of traffic. Tell him not to play in the street or run after stray balls.
- Be cautious when letting your child ride her tricycle. Keep her on the sidewalk and away from the street.
- Check outdoor playground equipment. Make sure there are no loose parts or sharp edges.
- When your child is playing outside, keep watch over him at all times.
- Practice water safety. Teach your child to swim.
- Teach your child how to interact with strangers and how not to interact.

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